THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) There is no proposal at present to privatise SAIL.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

(d) Fertilizer plant of Rourkela Steel Plant continues to be part of SAIL. However, there is a plan to convert it into a Joint Venture.

Modernization Failure of Rourkela Steel Plant

2877. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Rourkela Steel Plant is on the verge of collapse due to paucity of funds and losses accrued to it by the modernization failure;

(b) whether any special grant is being given to RSP to overcome its losses;

(c) what would be the future of workers if the plant faced a closure; and

(d) what forbids Government from taking action against the erring officials for loss in production due to failure in modernization?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) and (b) No, Madam.

(c) There is no plan at present, to close RSP.

(d) SAIL has informed that the volume of production has been regulated due to depressed market conditions and not because of any failure in modernization.

Setting up of a Training institute under SDF

2878. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have granted Rs. 10 crore out of Steel Development Fund (SDF) for a training institute to be set-up in Orissa; and

(b) if so, whether SDF can be utilized for such purposes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) and (b) The Steel Development Fund (SDF) was *inter-alia* created for financing schemes, projects and other capital expenditure for modernisation, research and development, rehabilitation, diversification, renewals and replacements, balancing additions to capacity, major new investments or any other programmes for improving the quantum or technology or efficiency of production of iron and steel and or their capacity.

An amount of Rs. 10 crores out of the Steel Development Fund has been earmarked for setting up of Biju Patnaik National Steel Institute at Puri, Orissa whose main activities will be basically threefold, *viz.,* (i) research and development; (ii) training and skill endorsement; and (iii) consultancy services in techno-economic and managerial division.

Duties and Levies on Steel

2879. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Steel alliance under CII has urged the Government to reduce duties and levies imposed on steel for rescuing the industry from the ongoing crisis; and

(b) the year wise breakup of duties and levies collected by Government during the last three years, with corresponding figures of saleable steel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) The Steel Industry Division of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has requested Jhe Government to reduce custom duties on those inputs for steel making which are not available indigenously. They have also proposed reduction in excise duties on steel items used for rural consumption including housing.